

Delaware Noxious Weed Committee Meeting

A meeting of the 2017 Delaware Noxious Weed Committee Meeting was held at the Delaware Department of Agriculture, 2320 South DuPont Hwy, Dover, DE on March 30, 2017, with the following in **attendance**: Secretary Michael Scuse, Dr. Faith Kuehn, Todd Davis, Blake Moore, Dr. Mark Van Gessel, Dan Severson, Fred West III, Corey Whaley, Jay Lester, Geri McClimens

Absent: Bryan Melvin

Call to Order/Introductions: Chairman Todd Davis called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m., welcomed everyone in attendance, and had everyone introduce themselves.

Remarks: Cabinet Secretary Scuse told everyone he appreciated them being here and thanked everyone for their participation. He also gave us an update on farming in Delaware.

Plant Pest Law: Dr. Faith Kuehn – Plant Industries Administrator - explained that we have a noxious weed law but we also have a plant pest law. This law exists in some way, shape or form in most states. This law is on the finding of what is a plant pest. She shared that we have the legal authority to prevent the introduction or to control one of these dangerous, injurious plant pests in the state. She explained that we have the authority to go in and ask the landowner that this be controlled. If the landowner doesn't act on it then we can go in and control it ourselves and send them a bill.

Weed Science Updates: Dr. Mark Van Gessel – University of Delaware Weed Scientist – shared that there is nothing on his notes to extending the noxious weed list from what it is. The Palmer amaranth is continuing to be the number one topic at Extension talks. He commented that we have ways of managing it and that timing of herbicide application is the biggest issue. There is no rescue treatment for Palmer amaranth that grows over six inches tall other than pulling the weeds and removing them from the infested area. Dr. Van Gessel explained that we're not the only one in the US that is dealing with this problem. The Weed Science Society of America hosted seven regional meetings on Palmer amaranth

and herbicide resistant weeds. They are done now and summarizing the data. The WSSA is looking at what we are missing in terms of making inroads into the problem of herbicide resistance and particularly Palmer Amaranth. Over the last year Dr. Van Gessel explained that Palmer is kind of spreading around the edges of existing locations; however, he hasn't seen many new locations popping up. He said that part of this is due to Todd Davis and Blake Moore's credit by making people aware that they have it. This has started to make an impact on getting rid of the Palmer amaranth.

County Noxious Weed Updates: Fred West III of Sussex County reported that he has been dealing with a portion of his farm land that is infested with Palmer amaranth. One of the challenges he has is that there are vegetables being grown in his neighborhood and this further limits his list of possible herbicide that he can use to control this difficult to kill weed.

Jay Lester of New Castle County questioned the Seed Law and how it affects the seeds that DELDOT uses on road construction. We discussed that the Noxious Weed Unit continues to work with DELDOT to try and prevent any new noxious weed infestations via seed. Jay also stated that he is taking strides to control Johnsongrass in sweet corn with the use of herbicide tolerant corn seed.

No farmer member report from Kent County as Bryan Melvin was unable to attend.

Noxious Weed Unit Updates: Todd Davis noted that he has a couple of disaster cases that he's not making any headway with. One of the cases he has been dealing with is a gentleman who basically can't afford to farm and can't afford to treat the weeds. Todd said he is grasping at straws with this one and will have to sit down with Michael and see what his next recourse is. Todd also explained that there are a couple other guys down in Delmar with a heavy infestation of Palmer Amaranth. These guys are trying and making some headway. Todd reported that he and Blake went to DuPont on Elkton Road to see how they do research on Palmer. They are over the top as far as sanitary. They are incinerating all the stuff. They are keeping plants small. They say they have some things that are looking good but how long is this going to stay reality. Todd is glad that DuPont is keeping them in the loop.

Adjourn: Todd thanked everyone for coming. He told everyone the next meeting will be in February 2018. The meeting was adjourned at 10:17 a.m.